



Lenten Devotion-February 22, 2024

Submitted by Bro. Jaimie

Luke 9:9-26

Scripture

The Parable of the Tenants

9 He went on to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. 10 At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 11 He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. 12 He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.

13 "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'

14 "But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' 15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others."

When the people heard this, they said, "God forbid!"

17 Jesus looked directly at them and asked, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written:

"The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone'[a]?"

18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed."

19 The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.

Paying Taxes to Caesar

20 Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. 21 So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. 22 Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

23 He saw through their duplicity and said to them, 24 “Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

25 He said to them, “Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

26 They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

Devotion:

In response to the religious leaders’ unwillingness to be authentic in their response to Jesus and accept him as the Son of God, Jesus tells the people a parable. Note: when someone refuses the gospel, it is right to offer a warning, even if it is couched in a wise form like this parable.

The parable is about a vineyard. The vineyard was a symbol of the nation of Israel (see Isaiah 5). This was a bit like telling a story about the national flag of Israel. Everyone would have understood its significance. There are tenants. The owner has let the vineyard out to be cared for by tenants. At the appropriate time for the owner to receive rent for letting out the vineyard, he sends a servant to receive the rent due. One after another of the servants are sent and they are all treated shamefully, beaten up, and thrown out by the tenants. The servants represent the prophets sent by God to God’s people asking them to give to God what is his due—true worship.

Last of all, the owner of the vineyard sends his son, thinking surely they will respect his son. But instead, the tenants reason that if they kill the son then the vineyard will be theirs. The son is Jesus, the Son of God. This was literally fulfilled in Jesus’ crucifixion. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.

The hearers of this parable understand what Jesus is saying. By God’s people’s rejection of God’s prophets, and finally the killing of God’s Son, their special place will be taken away. Given all of God’s promises to his people, this is a shocking conclusion. But then Jesus looks at them directly, quoting from the most cited psalm in the New Testament, Psalm 118: the stone the builders have rejected has become the capstone. Jesus, rejected, crucified,

will rise again and ascend on high, and be the capstone of God's salvation plan for his people.

The destiny of all people will be determined by whether they believe in the Son or not (20:18). My life will be determined by my response to Jesus. Jesus' death and resurrection is a sufficient sacrifice for my sins, the sins of all God's people, and the sin of the world.

Rejoice! Accept Jesus as Lord and such joy will be yours! Let us, then, not ignore what God says to us, but be quick to believe his Word and trust him

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for all the ways you cover my life with your grace. The gift of your son Jesus is Lord and Savior of my life. He is a revelation of your abundant grace in my life.

In your name, I pray. Amen.